

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ISLAMA 06551 01 OF 02 090303Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /100 W  
-----068617 090332Z /64

R 070600Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8000  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 6551

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PK, SHUM, PINT  
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS POTPOURRI - SOME PROGRESS PERHAPS?

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 5851 (B) ISLAMABAD 5718

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH THE EMBASSY IS UNABLE TO IDENTIFY ANY OVERALL TREND IN THE RULE-OF-LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE OF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA) IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPMENTS WHICH APPEAR GENERALLY POSITIVE. THE NUMBER OF ARRESTS REPORTED AND RUMORED IS CONSIDERABLY LOWER THAN DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF 1978, AND THE RELEASES OF THOSE ARRESTED EARLIER THIS YEAR ARE SUBSTANTIAL IN NUMBER. A FEW BIG-NAME POLITICAL FIGURES, INCLUDING BHUTTO'S DAUGHTER AND DENTIST, HAVE RECENTLY GAINED THEIR FREEDOM, AS WELL AS MANY LESSER LIGHTS OF VARIOUS POLITICAL STRIPES. MANY, HOWEVER, REMAIN DETAINED AT THE CLOSE OF THE MLA'S FIRST YEAR. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ISLAMA 06551 01 OF 02 090303Z

2. DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF ITS LIFE, THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION OF GENERAL ZIA UL-HAQ HAD A GENERALLY POSITIVE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, BROUGHT ABOUT MAINLY BY ITS RELEASE FROM DETENTION OF THOUSANDS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND OTHERS DETAINED ON POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED CHARGES FROM THE BHUTTO ERA. THE RECORD WAS MIXED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE

OF THE INSTITUTION OF FLOGGING AND PUBLIC HANGINGS FOR SERIOUS CRIMES, THE RESURRECTION (BUT, THUS FAR, NON-IMPLEMENTATION) OF AMPUTATION FOR REPEATED THEFTS, AND THE WILLINGNESS OF THE REGIME ITSELF TO DETAIN POLITICAL ACTIVISTS WITHOUT TRIAL IF THEY SHOWED ANY INCLINATION TO WHIP UP PUBLIC SUPPORT IN FAVOR OF FORMER PRIMIN BHUTTO OR AGAINST THE MLA.

3. AS THE MLA ENTERED 1978, THE OVERALL TREND TOWARD RELEASES WAS REVERSED AS THE REGIME CRACKED DOWN ON BHUTTO ACTIVISTS IN JANUARY AND IMPOSED A STIFF BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND ASSEMBLY IN MARCH, WHEN THE BHUTTO DEATH SENTENCE WAS ANNOUNCED.

4. HOWEVER, AS THE MLA NOW HEADS INTO ITS SECOND YEAR AT THE HELM, THE REGIME IS DEMONSTRATING FAR LESS OF A TENDENCY TO ARREST FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER. DETRACTORS ARE BEING ACCORDED MUCH MORE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THEMSELVES HEARD, THE COURT SYSTEM IS SHOWING A HEALTHY INDEPENDENCE IN FREEING SOME WHOM THE REGIME MIGHT WELL HAVE PREFERRED TO KEEP UNDER DETENTION, THE REGIME CONTINUES A SLOW, BUT STEADY RELEASE OF POLITICIANS AND AGITATORS -- MAINLY PRO-BHUTTO AND PRO-PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY -- ARRESTED EARLIER THIS YEAR, AND, IN HIS JUNE 25 SPEECH ON POLITICAL MATTERS, CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR (CMLA) GENERAL ZIA PROMISED A FURTHER RELAXATION OF THE BAN ON CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 06551 01 OF 02 090303Z

POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND ASSEMBLY LATER THIS YEAR IN CONNECTION WITH PLANS TO HOLD ELECTIONS TO MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES AND DISTRICT COUNCILS.

5. THERE FOLLOWS A SURVEY, BY PROVINCE, OF THE PRESENT STATUS OF ARRESTS, RELEASES, AND TRENDS AS OBSERVED BY THE EMBASSY AND CONSTITUENT POSTS.

A. PUNJAB/LAHORE:

--CONGEN LAHORE REPORTS A POSITIVE TREND IN THE PROVINCE IN TERMS OF ARRESTS - VS - RELEASES OF POLITICAL FIGURES. A PARTICULARLY KNOWLEDGEABLE LAHORE ATTORNEY ESTIMATES THERE ARE 200 TO 250 PRISONERS PRESENTLY HELD IN PUNJAB SOLELY OR MAINLY ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. THIS COMPARES WITH APPROXIMATELY 1,000 SUCH PRISONERS IN JANUARY, 1978. THE DECREASE HAS BEEN DUE TO RELEASES ORDERED BY THE HIGH COURT AFTER CASE REVIEWS AND RELEASES ORDERED BY THE MLA. ARRESTS OF PPP MEMBERS CONTINUE, BUT THE NUMBER IS REPORTEDLY VERY SMALL AT THIS TIME.

--IN OTHER PARTS OF THE PUNJAB (ISLAMABAD/RAWAL-PINDI/WESTERN PUNJAB) THERE HAVE BEEN VERY FEW ARRESTS REPORTED. ONE OF NOTE, HOWEVER, WAS THE DETENTION UNDER UNSPECIFIC PUBLIC SAFETY ORDER OF RAO RAHID, FORMER INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, WHO WAS IMPRISONED JUNE 6 AT ATTOCK IN THE WESTERN PORTION OF THE PROVINCE.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ISLAMA 06551 02 OF 02 090326Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /100 W  
-----068663 090332Z /64

R 070600Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8001  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 6551

B. SIND/KARACHI:

--AT LEAST EIGHT FORMER PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT MINISTERS OF THE BHUTTO ERA HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM PRISON IN SIND PROVINCE RECENTLY. ADDITIONALLY, A RULING BY THE SIND HIGH COURT DETERMINED THAT FORMER PRIMIN BHUTTO'S DAUGHTER, BENAZIR, HAD BEEN DETAINED ILLEGALLY AND EFFECTED HER RELEASE. THE COURT ALSO OVERTURNED THE FINDINGS OF A MILITARY COURT CONVICTION IN THE CASE OF TWO POLITICIANS IMPRISONED FOR JOINING A PROTEST IN SANGHER.

--IN ADDITION TO THE JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE DEMONSTRATED IN SIND, THERE HAS BEEN A LARGE-SCALE REHABILITATION OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OUSTED DURING THE BHUTTO REGIME. THE CONGEN IN KARACHI ESTIMATES 150 OFFICIALS SACKED BETWEEN 1972 AND THE 1977 COUP HAVE BEEN

REINSTATED. THIS PROBABLY REPRESENTS 30-40 PERCENT OF  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ISLAMA 06551 02 OF 02 090326Z

THOSE APPLYING FOR SUCH REDEMPTION.

--THERE WERE NUMEROUS ARRESTS OF STUDENTS IN SIND  
DURING THE SPRING STUDENT UNION ELECTIONS (PROBABLY  
SEVERAL HUNDRED), OF WHICH APPROXIMATELY 50 HAVE BEEN  
RELEASED IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS. WHILE SOME OF THESE  
ARRESTS RESULTED FROM THE LAWLESSNESS AND HIGH JINKS  
INHERENT IN STUDENT POLITICS, THE APPARENT SUCCESS OF  
THE LEFTISTS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE PRO-MLA STUDENT GROUPS  
UNDOUBTEDLY HAD AN EFFECT ON THE CRACK-DOWN.

--ALTHOUGH GIVEN LITTLE ATTENTION IN THE MEDIA, THE  
CONSULATE GENERAL IN KARACHI HAS NOTED A MAJOR DISMANTLING  
OF THE MARTIAL LAW ESTABLISHMENT AND SUMMARY MILITARY  
COURTS IN KARACHI AND SIND. THIS MAY NOT BODE PARTICULARLY  
WELL FOR THE AVERAGE CITIZEN, HOWEVER, AS THE CIVIL AUTHORI-  
TIES TAKING OVER HAVE LONG BEEN KNOWN FOR CORRUPTION  
AND ABUSE OF POWER.

--THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS IN SIND HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED  
TO BE MORE DISCRIMINATING IN THEIR CANCELLATION OF ARMS  
LICENSES. HERETOFORE THE CRACK-DOWN ON GUN OWNERS HAS  
BEEN PERVASIVE BUT NOW THERE IS RECOGNITION THAT SOME  
CITIZENS HAVE LEGITIMATE NEEDS AND INNOCENT PURPOSES  
FOR THEIR WEAPONS.

∴ NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP)/PESHAWAR:

--OUR CONSULATE IN PESHAWAR IS UNABLE TO IDENTIFY ANY  
WHOLESALE RELEASE OF BHUTTO'S PPP ASSOCIATES IN THE  
FRONTIER BUT IS AWARE OF A NUMBER OF PPP RANK AND FILE  
TYPES WHO HAVE RECENTLY COME OUT OF CONFINEMENT AFTER  
SERVING THEIR TERMS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 06551 02 OF 02 090326Z

--IN MID-JUNE THERE WAS A SPATE OF NEW ARRESTS IN  
THE NWFP, INCLUDING THE SEC GEN OF THE PAKISTAN SOCIALISTS  
PARTY, ABDUL WAHEED AND AFRASIAB KHATTUK, SEC GEN OF THE  
NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE PARTY (NPP). THERE ARE REPORTEDLY  
WARRANTS OUT FOR ADDITIONAL NPP OFFICERS AND WORKERS  
THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE.

--WE ARE NOT AWARE OF UNDER WHICH MARTIAL LAW ORDER (MLO) THESE ARRESTS WERE MADE BUT IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT, AT LEAST IN THE CASE OF AFRASIAB KHATTUK, PRAISE FOR THE NEW POPULAR DEMOCRACY IN AFGHANISTAN WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN HIS BEING DETAINED.

D. BALUCHISTAN:

--PAKISTAN'S OFTEN TROUBLESOME BUT SPARSELY POPULATED SOUTHWESTERN PROVINCE HAS ALSO EXPERIENCED SURPRISINGLY FEW POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED ARRESTS IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS. INDEED, TAHIR MOHAMMAD KHAN (THE BALUCHISTAN PPP SEC GEN UNDER BHUTTO) WAS RELEASED ON JUNE 4, SHORT OF SERVING HIS FULL TERM. THE REASON GIVEN FOR HIS RELEASE WAS POOR HEALTH, BUT CAN ALSO BE SEEN AS A FUNCTION OF THE PPP'S RELATIVE IMPOTENCE IN THE PROVINCE MAKING TAHIR LESS THAN A VIABLE THREAT TO THE MLA.

--WE HAVE HAD OTHER REPORTS OF A BUILD-UP IN TENSION IN BALUCHISTAN, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO INDICATIONS OF NEW DETENTIONS, ETC.

6. COMMENT: FOR A YEAR WE HAVE WATCHED THE ARREST/RELEASE CYCLE WAX AND WANE AND ARE THEREFORE HESITANT TO REPORT THESE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS AS AN OVERALL TREND TOWARD MLA RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS. THE STATISTICAL PREDOMINANCE OF RELEASES OVER ARRESTS MAY BE A SHORT-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ISLAMA 06551 02 OF 02 090326Z

LIVED PHENOMENON AS HAS PROVEN TRUE IN PREVIOUS CYCLES. THE FIRST TEST FOR THE CURRENT TREND WILL COME WQ EARLY AUTUMN WHEN THE BHUTTO APPEAL DECISION IS EXPECTED TO BE HANDED DOWN BY THE SUPREME COURT. PUBLIC UNREST, PROMPTING A STRONG MLA REACTION, COULD REVERSE -- AT LEAST TEMPORARILY -- THE PRESENT POSITIVE HUMAN RIGHTS TREND. HUMMEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNMENT REFORM  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 jul 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978ISLAMA06551  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780281-0646  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** ISLAMABAD  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780787/aaaacuzo.tel  
**Line Count:** 265  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** c162e779-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 ISLAMABAD 5851, 78 ISLAMABAD 5718  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2090355  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** HUMAN RIGHTS POTPOURRI - SOME PROGRESS PERHAPS?  
**TAGS:** SHUM, PINT, PK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/c162e779-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014